



LOCAL YOUTH PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL LIVESTOCK JUDGING COMPETITION

Cole Annas of Newton and Laura Elmore of Claremont were part of the 2010 North Carolina 4-H Livestock Judging Team that recently competed at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky. These two local 4-H members were selected to represent North Carolina by winning their state livestock judging contest in July. Since that time they have practiced and competed in Tennessee, Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and North Carolina in preparation for the national contest.

In Louisville the North Carolina team finished 1st in the sheep division, 5th in swine and 7th overall. Laura Elmore was 9th individually in the swine division and Cole Annas was 2nd in sheep. Cole Annas and Alyson Moore from Johnston County were 17th and 18th overall and received “All American” belt buckles for placing in the top 20 nationally. This is the 3rd highest placing team to have represented North Carolina in this competition since 1963.

Livestock judging consists of selecting animals based on their quality or suitability for a particular purpose – for market or for breeding. Contestants must correctly appraise the cattle, sheep, goats or pigs in each class and rank them from top to bottom based on their physical appearance combined with any written performance data that may be provided. In addition to the ranking, contestants must answer questions on 2 classes and must deliver a set of oral reasons on 4 classes of livestock. The combination scores from placings, questions and oral reasons makes up each individual score and the ultimate team score for the contest.

Livestock judging teaches critical thinking skills, logical decision-making and the ability to defend decisions through effective oral communication. Each state sends their best team each year and it is an honor to be selected to compete against the best 4-H livestock judges in the nation.

Catawba County has sent 18 local 4-H members to this competition since 2002. These individuals have helped win 2 National Championships and 1 Reserve National Championship in Livestock Skillathon and



Left to Right, seated: Laura Elmore, Cole Annas, Alyson Moore. Second row: Jeff Carpenter, Catawba County Extension Director and Brent Jennings, State 4-H Youth Livestock Specialist

finishes of 7th, 8th and 11th in Livestock Judging.

Local industry supporters that helped make this event possible for these youth include the Catawba Valley Cattlemen's Association, Catawba County Farm Bureau and numerous local livestock producers who opened up their farms for practice sessions and offered their support and encouragement.